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'LONG' SYLLABLES IN LATIN

In The Classical Journal 11.367, Professor E. D. Wright published an interesting note, entitled A Graphic Device for Marking Syllabic Quantity in Latin. In cases where, according to current terminology, a syllable is 'long', though its vowel is short, current practice, as he rightly reminds us, gives such abominations as *pātris, pātrem!* This is done not only by beginners in class-rooms, but in books by thoroughly competent scholars. I open at random such a book as R. Klotz's *Grundzüge Altrömischer Metrik*, at page 327, and find *pōtūm prōcēssimus, ādversūm sēntēntiam!* As a cure for such sinfulness Professor Wright suggests that, to indicate *syllabic* quantity, we set the macron and the breve *beneath* the line. He tells us, finally, that he made this suggestion as long ago as November 28, 1904, in The Latin Leaflet. There, it might be added, he advocated the use of the macron *above* the line to indicate *vowel* quantity: short *vowels* he there left unmarked.

It may interest some readers to learn that Professor Wright, in his paper in The Latin Leaflet, began with a reference to a discussion of this subject which formed part of an address on Form in Latin Poetry, which I delivered before The New York Latin Club, in May, 1904, and which was printed in Numbers 101-103 of The Latin Leaflet, October 3, 10, 17, 1904. In that discussion I proposed the invention of a new symbol for the marking of syllabic quantity as distinct from vowel quantity. This suggestion Professor Wright quite properly negatived, pointing out that the purpose I had in mind could be achieved very well by the simple device he has recalled to our minds in his note in The Classical Journal. In the paper on Form in Latin Poetry I repeated the suggestion I had made in my edition of the Aeneid (1901), § 229, that *vowels should be differentiated as long and short, and syllables as heavy and light*—an entirely simple differentiation, borrowed from the manual in which I began my study of Sanskrit. In marking the scansion of lines in my Vergil, in the Introduction, I set the macron only over long vowels, leaving the short vowels unmarked—the regular practice in editions of Latin prose writings in which the quantities are marked. The place of the metrical accent was indicated by a dot beneath the line. This is a very simple system, as effective, I think, as Professor Wright's. I have, however, been long using in my teaching Professor Wright's suggestion, without, however, recalling, I am sorry to say, that this specific suggestion had come from him.

But, unhappily for both of us, the conservatism of teachers has rendered futile, it would seem, our good intentions. I felt this in 1909, when I reiterated my own suggestion, in the course of a paper on The Scansion of Vergil and the Schools, in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 3.2-5, 10-12 (see page 10, second column). Of this conservatism I had once a very striking and very disheartening example. I asked a Summer Session class in Plautus to bring in to me certain verses of Plautus,

with the scansion marked. This I did after explaining carefully the whole matter at issue. At the next session of the class, when the marked papers were due, one member, who had the title of Professor, most earnestly asked me to allow him to use the system to which he was accustomed—the plan I had suggested was too confusing! No wonder the publishers report that of the third edition back of a certain well known handbook there is still a large sale!

This note is meant as a contribution to the history of the suggestion under consideration—a trifling matter, to be sure—, and—more important, by far—with the hope, faint, but not yet quite extinct, that some day so simple, but so fruitful a suggestion will be universally adopted.
C. K.

LET US SAVE THE CLASSICS!

War or no war, education has to go on. Our colleges send their seniors and their juniors into the army, but the younger classes should be nearly as large as ever, and the primary and the secondary schools will have full ranks. But the war is teaching us that we must so reform our system of education that it will produce leaders who can master emergencies.

One direction that the reform must take is obvious: for war or for peace, scientific research must have every encouragement. It is the policy that gave Germany its wonderful commercial development, and that has thus far saved it from collapse. Because of its scientific knowledge it has been able to find ingenious substitutes for things that it must have, and that the rest of the world has refused, or been unable, to furnish it. So much we can learn from the enemy. We must follow his example, not in copying or taking over what Germans have discovered or made, but by studying the secrets of nature for the mere love of knowledge, firm in the belief that here, as in Germany, business will find a way to apply the knowledge to industrial uses.

The other direction is not so obvious. Many will sneer when it is urged that it is as essential to our national well-being that we return to classical education as it is that we encourage scientific research. Who are the men that have risen to political leadership? In almost every case they are men who have been trained in the classics. Every country needs strong, well-balanced leaders, and to be well-balanced they must be well-educated. If scientific training will give them the proper equipment, all the better; but hitherto that form of education has not disposed its strong men to seek high place in government.

That, however, is only one of several reasons for urging a study of the classics. No other groundwork so well prepares a man for a high career in literature. It trains the mind to accuracy of thought and to conciseness of expression. Not everyone is capable of acquiring a classical education or of making the best use of it.

Editorial in The Youth's Companion, October 4, 1917. C. K.